

Message Text

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER)

SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

HEREWITH FULL TEXT THIS WEEK NEWSWEEK TREATMENT MIDEAST
MISSION PAGE 33 UNDER HEADING "KISSINGER TRIES TO GREASE
WHEELS":

THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN A GLOBAL ENERGY CRISIS ANYWAY,
BUT WHEN EGYPTIAN TANKS CROSSED THE SUEZ CANAL LAST FALL,
THE OIL PROBLEM BECAME SUDDENLY ENMESHED IN THE POLITICAL
PROBLEMS OF THE MIDEAST, EACH COMPLICATING THE OTHER.
JUST HOW DIFFICULT IT WILL BE TO SEPARATE THE TWO WAS
UNDERScoreD LAST WEEK WHEN THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION TOOK ON
BOTH PROBLEMS AT THE SAME TIME. MR. NIXON SENT OUT
INVITATIONS FOR AN UNPRECEDENTED INTERNATIONAL ENERGY
SUMMIT MEETING. AND HENRY KISSINGER FLEW OFF FOR THE THIRD
TIME IN AS MANY MONTHS TO THE MIDDLE EAST ON A MISSION THAT
ONE STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL DESCRIBED AS "GREASING THE
WHEELS" OF THE GENEVA PEACE TALKS.

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FEW QUESTIONED THE COMPLEXITY OF THE TASK. BEFORE
LEAVING FOR EGYPT AND ISRAEL, KISSINGER HELD AN UNUSUAL
JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE WITH DOMESTIC ENERGY CZAR WILLIAM
SIMON AND WARNED THAT THE ACCUMULATING STORM OVER THE

ENERGY CRISIS WAS "A TEST OF THE PROPOSITION THAT THE WORLD HAS BECOME TRULY INTERDEPENDENT." WHETHER THE WORLD WOULD PASS THE TEST WAS VERY MUCH AN OPEN QUESTION. ENERGY EXPERTS WERE DEEPLY DIVIDED OVER HOW SERIOUS THE OIL CRUNCH REALLY WAS AND WHAT THE RESPONSE TO THE PROBLEM SHOULD BE (PAGE 38). WHAT'S MORE, MANY WEST EUROPEAN AND JAPANESE OFFICIALS, SMARTING FROM WHAT THEY PERCEIVE AS YEARS OF NOT-SO-BENIGN NEGLECT FROM KISSINGER, WERE RUSHING TO CONCLUDE THEIR OWN SWEETHEART OIL DEALS WITH THE ARABS. AND WHILE ALL EIGHT NATIONS INVITED TO THE PRESIDENT'S ENERGY-SUMMIT-BRITAIN, WEST GERMANY, JAPAN, CANADA, ITALY, NORWAY, THE NETHERLANDS AND FRANCE- WERE READY TO ATTEND, FEW OF THEM SEEMED WILLING TO LINE UP BEHIND THE U.S. SO LONG AS WASHINGTON WAS ON THE OUST WITH THE ARAB WORLD.

EVEN THE FIRST STEP TOWARD RESTORING ARAB OIL SHIPMENTS--UNTANGLING EGYPTIAN AND ISRAELI TROOPS ALONG THE SUEZ CANAL--PROMISED TO TAX KISSINGER'S PROWESS AS A MEDIATOR. TWO WEEKS AGO, ISRAEL DEFENSE MINISTER MOSHE DAYAN REPORTEDLY TOLD KISSINGER IN WASHINGTON THAT ISRAEL HAD SOME "IDEAS" ABOUT AN ACCEPTABLE DISENGAGEMENT FORMULA -- A PHASED WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI TROOPS BACK ACROSS THE SINAI TO THE STRATEGIC MITLA AND GIDDI MOUNTAIN PASSES, A THINNED-OUT EGYPTIAN FORCE OF THREE, DIVISIONS-STRIPPED OF MENACING ARMOR AND ARTILLERY-ON THE EAST BANK OF THE SUEZ CANAL AND A 10-MILE-WIDE BUFFER ZONE OF UNITED NATIONS TROOPS IN BETWEEN. BUT LAST WEEK, AFTER SIX FRUSTRATING NEGOTIATING SESSIONS IN GENEVA, THE TALKS THERE BROKE DOWN OVER TECHNICAL POINTS. THE MEETINGS CONCEDED A RANKING ISRAELI DIPLOMAT, HAD BEEN LITTLE MORE THAN "SHADOW-BOXING."

WELCOME: KISSINGER PUT A LITTLE PUNCH BACK INTO THE SITUATION. AFTER AN ALL-NIGHT FLIGHT IN AIR FORCE ONE, HE UNCLASSIFIED

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SWEPT INTO ASWAN, AN EGYPTIAN WINTER RESORT 400 MILES SOUTH OF CAIRO, AND WAS MET BY EGYPT'S FOREIGN MINISTER ISMAIL FAHMY. FAHMY SQUIRED KISSINGER PAST TWO RANKS OF MILITARY POLICE IN RED BERETS, THEN WHISKED HIM OFF TO THE PRESIDENTIAL VILLA ON THE LEFT BANK OF THE NILE, WHERE ANWAR SADAT WAS RECUPERATING FROM BRONCHITIS -- AND PLANNING AN OVERHAUL OF HIS CABINET. CRISPLY TURNED OUT IN A MILITARY UNIFORM, SADAT WELCOMED KISSINGER AND THE TWO MEN PLUNGED INTO 90 MINUTES OF PRELIMINARY SPARRING.

THE KISSINGER'S STRATEGY WAS TO SOFT-PEDAL DAYAN'S

"IDEAS," SOUND OUT SADAT AND THEN CARRY THE EGYPTIAN'S PROPOSAL TO JERUSALEM WHERE HE EXPECTED HE COULD WORK OUT

A CONCRETE SET OF DISENGAGEMENT PLANS ACCEPTABLE TO PRIME MINISTER GOLDA MEIR AND HER NEW CABINET. BUT THERE WERE SOME SNAGS. ONE PROBLEM WAS THAT SADAT'S POSITION WAS NEARLY AS DELICATE AS KISSINGER'S. FOR WEEKS, REPORTED NEWSWEEK'S SENIOR EDITOR ARNAUD DE BORCHGRAVE, SADAT'S CLOSEST ADVISERS HAVE BEEN WARNING THEIR LEADER THAT DISENGAGEMENT COULD EASILY TURN INTO A TRAP. TO RECOGNIZE ISRAELI CONTROL OF THE MOUNTAIN PASSES IN THE SINAI, THEY ARGUED, WAS TANTAMOUNT TO GRANTING ISRAEL NEW- AND DEFENSIBLE-BOUNDARIES ON EGYPTIAN SOIL. TO PREVENT THAT, SADAT WANTED A GUARANTEED TIMETABLE FOR A BROAD ISRAELI PULLBACK TO ISRAEL'S PRE-1967 BORDERS.

THE MOST PRESSING PROBLEM FOR SADAT WAS TO STRIKE A BARGAIN WITH ISRAEL WITHOUT BRUISING THE NEWFOUND UNITY OF THE ARAB WORLD-AND SADAT'S IMAGE AS WELL. TO ACCEPT A BUFFER OF UNITED NATIONS TROOPS, REOPEN THE SUEZ CANAL OR MAKE OTHER CONCESSIONS WHILE ISRAEL STILL HELD ONTO TERRITORY OCCUPIED DURING THE 1967 SIX DAY WAR WOULD BRING CRIES OF OUTRAGE FROM SYRIA, SAUDI ARAB AND THE PALESTINE LIBERATION ORGANIZATION. SADAT IS ALREADY UNDER CONSIDERABLE ARAB PRESSURE. LAST WEEK LIBYA'S VOLATILE PRESIDENT MUAMMAR KADDAFI AND TUNISIA'S MODERATE PRESIDENT HABIB BOURGUIBA ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WERE MERGING THEIR TWO COUNTRIES INTO "THE ISLAMIC ARAB REPUBLIC" DEDICATED TO WRESTING BACK ALL LOST ARAB LANDS-A SHARP SLAP AT SADAT, WHO HAD ONCE BEEN ON THE VERGE OF UNITING UNCLASSIFIED

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HIS OWN COUNTRY WITH LIBYA.

IN JERUSALEM, PRIME MINISTER MEIR HAD A PILE OF TROUBLES OF HER OWN: A PAINFUL CASE OF SHINGLES AND A FRACTIOUS COALITION OF SUPPORTERS IN THE KNESSET TO KEEP IN LINE (FOLLOWING STORY). BUT FACED WITH THE MULTIPLYING PRESSURE OF THE ARABS, THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES AND ITS OIL-THIRSTY PARTNERS, SHE HAD LITTLE CHOICE BUT TO ADOPT A MORE FLEXIBLE NEGOTIATING POSTURE. TUCKED AWAY IN WHAT AN ISRAELI NEWSPAPER WAS ALREADY CALLING THE "DAYAN PLAN" WAS A SIGNIFICANT CONCESSION TO SADAT. ISRAEL WOULD NOT FREEZE ITS TROOPS WITHDRAWAL AT THE MOUNTAIN PASSES, ONE INSIDER TOLD NEWSWEEK'S JAY AXELBANK. INSTEAD, IT WAS WILLING TO LINK THE INITIAL PULLBACK TO FURTHER WITHDRAWALS EVEN BEFORE A FINAL PEACE

AGREEMENT WAS SIGNED. THE ISRAELI CONCESSION CAME AS A MINOR SURPRISE AND IT BUOYED KISSINGER'S HOPES FOR AN AGREEMENT.

IT WAS A PROMISING DEVELOPMENT -- THOUGH WHETHER IT WOULD BREAK THE DEADLOCK WAS OPEN TO QUESTION. THE KISSINGER TEAM MAINTAINED THAT ITS OWN PRIMARY GOAL WAS

ONLY TO REACH AN AGREEMENT ON BROAD PRINCIPLES THAT COULD
LATER BE SPELLED OUT IN DETAIL AT GENEVA. ANY TALK OF A
FINAL SETTLEMENT, ONE SENIOR U.S. OFFICIAL TOLD NEWSWEEK'S
DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT BRUCE VAN VOORST, WOULD BE A
"PRESCRIPTION FOR TOTAL PARALYSIS." STILL, THE SIGNS
SEEMED TO BE POINTING TOWARD SOME KIND OF AGREEMENT -- AND
ONCE THE PARTIES GOT TOGETHER, THE DETAILS MIGHT VERY WELL
BE IRONED OUT IN GENEVA WITHIN TWO WEEKS, WITH THE PHYSICAL
SEPARATION OF THE TWO ARMIES TAKING PERHAPS ANOTHER MONTH.

DAMAGE: TIME WAS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE TO KISSINGER
FOR ANOTHER REASON. EVEN AS HE SHUTTLED BACK AND FORTH
BETWEEN JERUSALEM AND EGYPT, THE JOB OF SELLING THE
PRESEIDENT'S UPCOMING ENERGY SUMMIT WAS BECOMING MORE
DIFFICULT EVERY DAY. AFTER RAISING THE PRICE OF OIL BY

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